

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 576
By Stamps

A RESOLUTION to encourage rental property lessors to adopt less restrictive pet ownership policies for senior citizen residents in order to promote the health and well-being of these citizens.

WHEREAS, the process of aging often involves a series of losses: loss of spouse, friends, career, health and mobility; the isolation resulting from these losses can become overwhelming for the older person, leading to depression and serious physical disorders; and

WHEREAS, pets provide significant physical and emotional benefits for older persons by providing companionship, helping to ease loneliness, and providing a sense of security; for senior citizens who live alone, pets provide someone to talk to, someone to touch, someone who loves them and needs them and, for many older persons, pets provide a reason to go on living and caring; and

WHEREAS, numerous medical studies have shown that owning a pet reduces the risk of developing heart disease, reduces high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and that owning a pet reduces mortality from coronary heart disease and increases survival time after a heart attack; and

WHEREAS, numerous medical studies have shown that senior citizens who are pet owners recover more quickly from illness and make significantly fewer doctor visits than non-pet-owning senior citizens, and thus there is a lower expenditure of public healthcare dollars for senior citizens who are pet owners; and

WHEREAS, medical reports show that having to give up a beloved pet can be a source of severe stress for older persons, leading to prolonged depression, physical illness and even death; and

WHEREAS, extensive surveys in states that have laws protecting their senior citizens' rights to own pets show that senior citizens are highly responsible pet owners who cherish their pets and take excellent care of them, and that the typical property damage problems landlords fear simply do not occur when the pet-owning tenants are senior citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby encourage landlords, owners and managers of rental property to give every consideration to renting to senior citizens who own pets, and who desire to own pets, realizing the crucial adjunct to their health, quality of life and longevity that pets provide, and not to ask, or require, that senior citizens give up beloved pets as a condition for tenancy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we ask landlords, owners and managers of rental property not to set such high security deposits or pet fees for senior citizens that would make it financially difficult, or impossible, for senior citizens on fixed or limited incomes to own pets.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we encourage senior citizen pet owners to continue their good reputation for taking excellent care of their pets and preventing any property damage, so as to pave the way for more senior citizens to have the opportunity to own pets in rental housing.

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